

Message Text

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45

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-12 ADP-00 COA-02 SCI-06 OST-04 NSF-04

EB-11 DOTE-00 COME-00 INT-08 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09

H-02 INR-09 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01

SS-14 USIA-12 ACDA-19 NIC-01 RSR-01 /172 W

----- 071298

R 161020 Z MAR 73

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6324

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USMISSION USUN NY

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS : PBOR KS

SUBJ: PRC ON OIL EXPLORATION

1. NCNA (MARCH 15) CARRIED THE FULL TEXT OF A STATEMENT BY THE PRC FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN ON OFFSHORE OIL EXPLORATION. THE STATEMENT SAID THAT THE " SOUTH KOREAN AUTHORITIES" HAD PERMITTED THE DRILLING SHIP GLOMAR IV, REGISTERED IN PANAMA BUT CHARTERED BY A US COMPANY, TO EXPLORE IN THE YELLOW SEA AND THE EAST CHINA SEA. THIS " ATTEMPT TO GRAB CHINA' S COASTAL SEA BED RESOURCES" AROUSES THE PRC' S " ATTENTION." THE STATEMENT CONTINUED THAT THE JURISDICTION OF THE SEA AREA BETWEEN " CHINA AND HER NEIGHBORS... HAS NOT YET BEEN DELIMITED." SINCE SOUTH KOREA HAD " FLAGRANTLY AND UNILATERALLY" ALLOWED EXPLORATION, PEKING " RESERVES ALL RIGHTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES."

2. COMMENT: THE STATEMENT DID NOT INDICATE WHERE THE OFFENDING GLOMAR IV WAS WORKING, BUT SINCE JAPAN AND THE ROC WERE NOT

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MENTIONED, IT MUST HAVE BEEN IN ONE OF THE ROK ZONES. EARLIER CHINESE STATEMENTS ON THE QUESTION OF SEABED EXPLORATION IN THE SEAS ADJACENT TO CHINA HAVE BEEN NOTABLY STRONGER, DENOUNCING THE US AND JAPAN FOR " FLAGRANT ENCROACHMENT," " AGGRESSION," AND " CRIMINAL ACTS," AND EXPRESSING PEKING' S " INDIGNATION" (SEE 1970 HK 5382, 1971 HK 2780, AND 1972 USUN 783).

3. THE PRESENT STATEMENT, WHILE IT MUST BE NOTED AS A WARNING, IMPLIES THAT SINCE JURISDICTION HAS NOT BEEN DELIMITED, THE PRC MAY BE WILLING TO DISCUSS THE QUESTION WITH ITS NEIGHBORS AND PERHAPS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES. IT ALSO IMPLIES THAT EXPLORATION NEAR KOREA IS LESS SENSITIVE TO THE PRC THAN THAT NEAR TAIWAN AND THE SENKAKUS. THE STATEMENT DOES NOT MENTION THE US GOVERNMENT.

4. PEKING HAS NOT SPECIFIED ITS OWN POSITION ON SUCH QUESTIONS AS THE CONTINENTAL SHELF AND DEPTH LIMITS FOR CLAIMS TO SEABED RESOURCES. IT HAS LIKEWISE NOT REVISED ITS 1958 CLAIM TO A 12- MILE LIMIT OF TERRITORIAL WATERS, ALTHOUGH IT HAS ENDORSED NUMEROUS OTHER COUNTRIES' CLAIMS TO WIDER LIMITS.
OSBORN

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 MAR 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: boyleja
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973HONGK02646
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: n/a
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: HONG KONG
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730334/aaaaibxf.tel
Line Count: 89
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: boyleja
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 JUL 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24-Jul-2001 by elyme>; APPROVED <23-Aug-2001 by boyleja>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> jms 971217
Subject: PRC ON OIL EXPLORATION
TAGS: PBOR, KS
To: AIT TAIPEI
EA
MOSCOW
SECSTATE WASHDC
SEOUL
TOKYO
USUN NEW YORK

Type: TE

Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005